

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SHUM, US, UR
SUBJECT: SOVIET COMMENTS ON INTERRELATIONSHIP OF HUMAN RIGHTS, DETENTE,

VANCE VISIT, SALT 11, AND BELGRADE MEETING

1. BRITISH HEAD OF CHANCERY MALLABY GAVE POL COUNSELOR
FOLLOWING EXTRACT OF CABLE DATED FEBRUARY 28:

2. "H OF C TODAY HAD TWO HOURS' TALK ABOUT THE
STATE OF DETENTE WITH BYKOV AND GANTMANN, RESPECTIVELY
DEPUTY DIRECTOR AND A PROFESSOR AT THE USSR ACADEMY OF
SCIENCES' INSTITUTE OF WORLD ECONOMY AND INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS (MEMO). THE FOLLOWING WERE THE MAIN POINTS
MADE BY THE RUSSIANS:

"(A) THE LOSS OF MOMENTUM IN DETENTE IN 1976 MAY
NOT BE FULLY RECOVERABLE, FOR INSTANCE, BECAUSE OF TECHNICAL
ADVANCES SOME ASPECTS OF SALT 11 MAY NOW BE MORE DIFFICULT
TO HANDLE.

"(B) DETENTE'S MAIN VALUE IS IN PROVIDING A
GOOD ATMOSPHERE FOR PROGRESS ON CONCRETE MATTERS. IT ALSO
PRODUCES "A SHOCK ABSORBER EFFECT," ENABLING EAST-WEST
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DIFFICULTIES TO BE OVERCOME MORE EASILY; AND "A BACKSTOP
EFFECT" WHICH PREVENTS TENSION RISING ABOVE A CERTAIN
LEVEL. PRESIDENT CARTER'S DECISION TO STICK TO DETENTE
AFTER HAWKING NOISES OF THE CAMPAIGN IS PROOF OF THE
INEVITABILITY OF DETENTE.

"(C) THE DIFFICULTY IS TO DEVELOP "THE ART OF

MANAGING DETENTE". THE USSR BELIEVES THAT THE WEST NOW ACCEPTS THE PROPOSITION THAT, WHILE THE RUSSIANS WILL NOT TRY TO EXPORT REVOLUTION, DETENTE CANNOT INVOLVE A MORATORIUM ON SOCIAL PROGRESS IN THE WEST OR ON VICTORIES FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD. CERTAIN CONCEPTS WERE HANG-OVERS FROM THE COLD WAR: SUCH AS TALKS OF A SOVIET MILITARY THREAT OR OF CIVIL RIGHTS IN THE USSR. WHEN ATTEMPTS ARE MADE TO INTRODUCE SUCH THINGS INTO INTER-STATE RELATIONS, THOSE RELATIONS INEVITABLY BECOME MORE COMPLICATED. IT IS NO GOOD THE WEST CLAIMING A MORAL RIGHT TO SPEAK ABOUT DISSIDENTS: THE PRESERVATION OF PEACE IS ALSO A MORAL REQUIREMENT OF THE HIGHEST ORDER.

"(D) THERE IS A "LINK IN NATURE" BETWEEN DETENTE AND INTERNAL EVENTS WITHIN STATES. ONE EXAMPLE IS THE HOLD-UP IN DETENTE CAUSED BY THE U.S. ELECTIONS. BUT, DESPITE THE EXISTENCE OF A CERTAIN "INDIVISIBILITY OF DETENTE", ALL ATTEMPTS TO PRESS LINKAGE ARTIFICALLY WILL TEND TO SLOW DOWN PROGRESS INTERNATIONALLY. THE PAST "IMPERIALIST ENCIRCLEMENT" OF THE SOVIET UNION CREATED "A SIEGE MENTALITY". THIS IS NOW DISAPPEARING, BUT THE INTERNAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE USSR ARE STILL DETERMINED LARGELY BY THE PAST. THEY ARE HOWEVER INFLUENCED NOWADAYS BY EXTERNAL EVENTS. "THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY" IS A CONTINUING PROCESS. BUT THE SOVIET UNION IS NOT RESPONSIBLE TO INTERNATIONAL OPINION FOR ITS CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND WILL CONTINUE TO PUNISH THOSE WHO BREAK ITS LAWS.

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"(E) THE PROSPECTS FOR SALT 11 COULD BE AFFECTED BY THE FUSS IN THE WEST ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS AND A SOVIET THREAT. THERE IS A RISK OF A PROCESS OF ESCALATING VERBAL TENSION. REALISTIC POLITICIANS MUST DO ALL THEY CAN TO PREVENT THINGS GETTING OUT OF CONTROL. THE SOVIET PRESS HAS TO REACT WHEN THE WEST BEHAVES NEGATIVELY: CONVERSELY, IT ALWAYS MAKES THE BEST OF ANY PROGRESS IN DETENTE AND THIS HELPS TO DEVELOP IN THE SOVIET PUBLIC A POSITIVE ATTITUDE TO EAST/WEST RELATIONS.

"(F) "NOTHING COULD BE MORE FATAL" THAN AN ATTEMPT TO PUT THE USSR IN THE DOCK AT BELGRADE. THE RIGHT APPROACH TO CSCE IMPLEMENTATION IS FOR EACH COUNTRY "TO CULTIVATE ITS OWN GARDEN* WITHOUT CRITICIZING OTHERS. THE SOVIET UNION HAS TAKEN VARIOUS STEPS TO IMPLEMENT THE FINAL ACT, AS AN EARNEST OF ITS GOOD INTENTIONS."

3. "AT THE END OF THE CONVERSATION MALLABY TOOK NOTE THAT THE TWO RUSSIANS HAD NOT HINTED AT ANY POSTPONEMENT

OF VANCE'S VISIT STARTING ON 28 MARCH OR OF BELGRADE. HE ALSO NOTED THE IMPLICATION AT VARIOUS POINTS IN THE CONVERSATION THAT THERE WOULD BE MORE SOVIET MOVES TO IMPLEMENT BASKET 111. BYKOV ASSENTED ON THESE POINTS. HE SAID THAT THIS SOVIET POSITION WAS PROOF OF "OUR HIGHLY RESPONSIBLE APPROACH TO EAST"WEST RELATIONS".

4. WE AGREE WITH MALLABY THAT BYKOV'S ASSENT TO MALLABY'S CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS (PARAGRAPH 3) REFLECTS SENIOR CLEARANCE.
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Message Attributes

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